

High Representative Imposes Fines on Parties that Challenge Rule of Law

The High Representative, Paddy Ashdown, yesterday issued a Decision imposing a five-percent fine, with immediate effect, on the publicly provided funds allocated to the HDZ in Cantons Six and Eight for their continued refusal to harmonize their Primary and Secondary Education legislation with the State-level framework law introduced, with HDZ support, almost a year ago.

He has also decided to issue suspended fines against the HDZ in Canton Ten and the HDZ, SDA and SBiH in Canton Seven. In these Cantons, the fines will not be enacted until June 18 in recognition of the fact that the parties have made significant efforts in recent days to bring their education legislation into line with the State level framework law. Should they finish the process of harmonization in the next two weeks, the parties in Cantons Seven and Ten will avoid the fines altogether. Should they fail to do this, the five percent fines will be backdated to Friday 4 June.

The HDZ in Canton Two will not be fined following the adoption of fully harmonized laws in the Cantonal Assembly yesterday.

"I welcome the fact that the HDZ in Canton Two have brought their legislation into line with the State-level law," the High Representative said. "I also welcome recent moves to do the same in Cantons Ten and Seven. I hope these Cantons will finish the job in the next fortnight and avoid being fined altogether.

"But those who have made no effort to respect the unanimously expressed will of the State Parliament, despite their parties' claims to support the building of the State, must pay a penalty for their obstruction. As of yesterday they are paying that penalty, and they will continue to do so until their laws have been brought into line with the State-level Law. The Rule of Law, and the constitutional supremacy of the State Parliament, must be upheld."